OPENIDEO CHALLENGE

NEIGHBORY

THE WORLD’S SMALL TOWN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The rising international migration numbers across the globe pose one of the most significant challenges of our generation: integrating people on the move in countries of destination.

Often, host governments, humanitarian agencies, and NGOs do not have a dedicated platform in which international migrants, and receiving societies can work together to build a cohesive community sharing the benefits of immigrant integration.

The more complex, the more localized, the more personal the challenges to effective migrant-host population engagement become, which may include language, motive, and benefit barriers, the more difficult it is for traditional organizations to overcome them.

It is therefore imperative to build an intermediary platform to support the engagement of international migrants and native populations in community building that reaps the benefits of dynamic social, economic, and cultural integration.

One of the best ways to implement this is by adopting the neighborly mutual giving spirit of small towns that promotes inclusion and upholds human welfare.

Anyone can be a good neighbor to anyone. Nobody is so unskilled he has no help to give; and nobody is so skilled she has nothing to receive. This reciprocal altruism can turn the world into a "small town" where people know, trust, and help each other.

Fostering collaboration as the main driver for immigrant integration, this solution recommends the creation of Neighbory, a public-spirited blockchain platform that supports the engagement of migrant workers and native populations in community building by rewarding humanitarian action with digital currency called Hylp.

Neighbory applies gamification strategies, or gaming mechanics, including leaderboards, trophies, and badges, to a non-gaming environment, to create its own give-and-take economy different from normal financial reckonings. All services are treated equal, no matter the market value. One hour of work equals one Hylp. One hour of caring for elderly migrants earns one Hylp; one hour of teaching language earns one Hylp. The service provider receives the Hylp from the receiver. Each Hylp can be used to obtain one hour of reciprocal service within the community.

To illustrate Neighbory’s gamified give-and-take system: Local A provides one hour of legal work to help Migrant B, and earns one Hylp. Local A can then use that Hylp to receive one hour of accounting services from Migrant C. Now Migrant C has one Hylp to spend on one hour of resume writing assistance from Volunteer D or from other community members. And so on.
Neighbory facilitates community integration through three interrelating functions:

1. **Community-builder.** It brings migrants and local people together, assesses individual motivations, needs, and expectations, and encourages the creation of interventions to achieve the goals of integration.

2. **Matchmaker.** The platform provides a two-sided service market by aggregating available sets of skills and assets, matches givers with takers, and simplifies the exchange and reward system with a mobile app.

3. **Motivator.** Neighbory encourages volunteerism with its give-and-take ecosystem and rewards altruistic action with readily usable and shareable community currency that enables people on low incomes to avail of services that would otherwise be unaffordable to them.

To build a secure, engaged, and cohesive community where people can contribute and fulfill their potential, Neighbory turns the world into a small town and transforms migrants and host societies into good neighbors.
PROBLEM

People on the move bring with them tremendous potential to be welfare-enhancing assets that contribute to the economy, society, and cultural diversity of the country of destination. Indeed, a recent technical paper published by the United Nations said, “Migration typically brings economic growth, youth, trade, investment, and entrepreneurship, especially to stagnant economies and aging populations. It raises the economic productivity of regions that receive more migrants, as migrant workers on average tend to complement native workers and encourage business investment.”

Despite the substantial benefits of migration, however, there is a conspicuous unavailability of person-to-person immigrant integration platform for international migrants and host societies to collaborate in building a secure, engaged, and interconnected community.

Without a clear access point for connection and cooperation, migrants remain remarkably vulnerable and are likely to face exploitation at the hands of unscrupulous individuals, organizations, and even human traffickers. Consequently, local sectors will struggle to see immigration issues with clarity, and to engage in effective actions that can help address the challenges that encumber community integration.

Lack of meaningful cooperation reinforces socio-cultural isolation, which, for migrants, may turn destination countries into a big, complicated, and unwelcoming world to navigate. Subsequently, the lack of perceived, experienced, and shared community value may result in migration being viewed as an unpleasant experience and may eventually breed apathy among the receiving population.

To achieve effective immigrant integration, communities must hurdle three barriers:

1. The necessity of creating a hybrid culture that reduces the social distance between international migrants and natives, taking into consideration the disparate requirements, capabilities, and aspirations of not only people on the move but also those of the citizens of the host nations;
2. The complexity of managing a sustainable community engagement system that fosters inclusion, encourages reciprocal altruism, and makes both migrant workers and natives a part of the solution; and
3. The difficulty of addressing the Value-Action Gap, a behavioral phenomenon that results in sizeable discrepancy between people’s knowledge, values, and intentions to engage in humanitarian service, and their observable positive action, which often becomes the pitfall of many volunteer organizations.

The aforementioned barriers require a solution that weaves migration and community integration together in a manner that engages people on the move and host population in dynamic cooperation that is as local as possible and as international as necessary.
Neighbory is a service trading platform that builds a cohesive network of international migrants, receiving societies, and organizations that reward engagement in humanitarian action with digital currency to promote transnational inclusion, give-and-take correlation, and community self-help.

The concept is based on local Time Banking model where a person with a specific skill set trades hours of work with another person with a different skill set. There is no money involved; the hours are the currency.

Neighbory, however, offers a different approach with its gamified reciprocity-based system that allows for individual contribution to community building from anywhere in the world. Every member—migrant worker, host citizens, and even international volunteers—is considered a neighbor that can give and receive service; and every service is considered humanitarian action that is rewarded with the digital currency Hylp.

Backed by blockchain technology, Neighbory offers a transparent accounting system that reflects each person’s giver and receiver actions and automates Hylp transactions. The platform’s unit of account is the person-hour. All skill sets, from simple jobs to high-skill services, are valued equal in Hylp, notwithstanding their worth in the traditional money economy. One hour of plumbing work, for example, is equivalent to one hour of medical service.

Neighbory’s simple rule: All services are valued equal in Hylp, regardless of their market value. One work hour equals one Hylp.

Neighbory’s basic two-way system is this: Member A provides one hour of service to help Member B, and earns one credit of Hylp. Member A can now use that Hylp to bid one hour of service from Member B or from other community members. And the exchange goes on and on.

It is free for anyone from any part of the world to join and become a neighbor. Upon signing up, members get a free set of 24 Hylp coins, which they can already use to pay for services offered by other members on the Neighbory marketplace.

The platform’s gamified give-and-take ecosystem addresses the barriers to immigrant integration with three interdepending innovation drivers:

1. **Meet & Greet.** Neighbory’s community-building scheme incorporates social features designed like small town meet-and-greet events, which ensures that members will start to connect and engage with other members right after signing up.

2. **Potluck.** The community’s two-sided service marketplace that aggregates skills and goods and matches givers with takers in neighborly manner, simplifying exchange management with intuitive interface, chatbot, and mobile app.

3. **Hylp.** It counteracts the Value Action Gap by encouraging volunteerism and community building and rewarding altruistic action with readily usable and shareable community currency.
MEET & GREET

Neighbory encourages community interaction right on the first day of membership. First, the system makes it easy for anyone to sign up as a new neighbor through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media profiles, and even pull their photos into the platform. Next, it turns the process into a community meet-and-greet event. And then it rewards personal interaction with Hylp.

Like small town folks giving a VIP or a new resident a warm welcome, this event is a community icebreaker that is meant to introduce migrants, local people, and organizations to each other in a fun and engaging way.

Every new sign up is announced through the community newsfeed with a link to a time-sensitive Meet & Greet page where people can follow, post messages, and add photos to welcome the new neighbor, and earn rewards. The welcome page lasts only for twenty-four hours; at the end of the period, it disappears.

Meet & Greet engagement features may include the following:

- **Welcome Button.** Welcomers press this button to join the raffle to win Hylp, free services, or other giveaways for both the new neighbor and the winning welcomer.

- **Good Neighbor.** The person whose welcome post gets the Good Neighbor badge from the new neighbor earns one Hylp.

- **Hylping Hands.** People may use this feature to welcome a new neighbor by donating Hylp or free services.

Meet & Greet offers a social integration quick start where neighbors first learn about neighbors’ stories, socio-cultural backgrounds, experiences, skills, desires, and motivations as migrants, as locals, and as volunteers. And community collaboration takes it from there.

POTLUCK

Potluck is Neighbory’s marketplace where people who want to offer services and goods and people who want to receive them get together in a “public-spirited potluck” on the platform.

As a humanitarian endeavor, it espouses the small town “neighbor helping neighbor” spirit, reimagines the traditional money economy, and provides a way of using volunteerism and community self-help to trade services and goods without money.

Since each neighbor can contribute unique skills to the community, all efforts are valued on the same scale to help strengthen social ties and develop social capital. Even goods are priced based on the estimated amount of time involved in producing them, regardless of their market value.

Through Potluck, Neighbory promotes inclusion by redefining work value and creating relationships, which enables people on a low income—migrants, locals, or even volunteers—to avail of services and goods otherwise unaffordable to them. Its give-and-take ecosystem not only provides access to services but also offers ways to fulfill altruistic motivations, expand social networks and friendships, exercise social activism, or even enhance self-esteem, skills, and confidence.

Potluck’s smooth search process matches the givers’ offers with the receivers’ needs and facilitates neighbor-to-neighbor exchange of services and goods. It also allows for Hylp sharing between community members so they can help each other even at a distance.
The platform’s two-sided marketplace has two key players:

- **Givers.** People on the move, locals, volunteers, and organizations that post the services and goods they offer on Potluck. They may come from the host country or from any country in the world. Givers can be creative with their offers and list them under appropriate Potluck categories—from graphic design to yoga lessons to babysitting to elderly caregiving. They can even offer a listening ear to anyone who wishes to tell a migrant story.

- **Receivers.** Migrants, natives, volunteers, and organizations from any part of the world that post the services, goods, and even donations that that they need on the Potluck. Aside from listing, they may also contact specific neighbors for their service requests.

Potluck has the option to create local leaderboards between friends, neighbor circles, and volunteer teams in a competition to earn points, trophies and badges, and achieve the ultimate goal of becoming the Neighbor King. And being Neighbor King comes with corresponding Hylp rewards.

Reward points are based on services rendered, goods delivered, user votes, comments, and other platform contributions.

**HYLP**

**Hylp** is Neighbory’s community currency. It is the reward for neighbors who contribute volunteer hours and tradable goods to the community.

Backed by blockchain technology, Neighbory offers a transparent reciprocity-based service exchange system that records people’s voluntary work hours or delivered goods, and then it converts them into Hylp, which they can spend to obtain services from other community members.

When a Giver provides an hour of service to a Receiver, the platform automatically debits one Hylp from the Receiver’s currency wallet and credits it to the Giver’s wallet. It may scale according to the number of hours needed to accomplish a task.

Upon signing up, people get a free set of 24 Hylp coins, which they can use to purchase needed services and goods from other members. If their currency wallet gets depleted, they have the following options to get more Hylp:

1. **Work.** Offer services to other members and earn one Hylp per hour.
2. **Trade goods for Hylp.** List homemade crafts, baked goods, second-hand books, and other tradable items on Potluck.
3. **Ask for Hylping Hands.** Request neighbors to help by sharing their spare Hylp.
4. **Invite a Friend.** Send requests to Facebook friends and earn one Hylp when they sign up.
5. **Buy Hylp.** Use Neighbory’s in app purchases to buy Hylp packages.
NEIGHBORY IN ACTION

Since Neighbory is a global platform, the exchange of services and goods may take place not only between people on the move and natives living in the same neighborhood, but also between people who are continents apart. Some of them may not even set foot in the communities they are supporting.

People on the move can join Neighbory even before they get to the country of destination; and host societies can “neighbor” them long before they arrive. Here’s an example of how Neighbory turns the world into a small town:

1. Margaret is an American immigration lawyer who spends one hour helping Juan, an Honduran asylum seeker, prepare the documents for his immigration case;
2. Juan rewards Margaret with one Hylp;
3. Margaret uses her Hylp to request one hour of math tutorial for her son from Amira, a migrant teacher from Syria who is working odd jobs while waiting for her immigration hearing;
4. Amira then uses Margaret’s Hylp plus two more from her Neighbory wallet to pay Margaret to represent her in the hearing;
5. Now Margaret donates her three Hylp coins through Hylping Hand to reward James who volunteers to care for unaccompanied children at the US-Mexican border;
6. James uses one Hylp to reward Jessica, a medical volunteer who treats the children;
7. Meanwhile, Juan has earned three Hylp coins giving massage therapy to other migrants at the border; and he uses two coins to reward Noah, a volunteer who spends two hours delivering food and clothing to Juan’s wife who got separated from him in detention;
8. Jessica uses the Hylp she got from James to buy a medical book for Pia, a Filipina nurse training in Manila in preparation for immigration to London; and so on.

NEIGHBORY’S CORE VALUE

Neighbory believes that anyone—regardless of race, gender, age, skills, or location—can be a good neighbor to anyone. Nobody is so unskilled he has no help to give, and nobody is so skilled she has no help to receive. This reciprocal altruism can turn the world into a “small town” where people know, trust, and help each other.